EN ROUTE TO THE

KLONDIKE

A SERIES OF

PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS

CHILKOOT PASS
SKAGUAY TRAIL
LAKE LINDERMAN
LAKE BENNETT

Part I.

ST. MICHAELS
DAWSON CITY
FORTY MILE CREEK
YUKON RIVER

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W. B. CONKEY COMPANY

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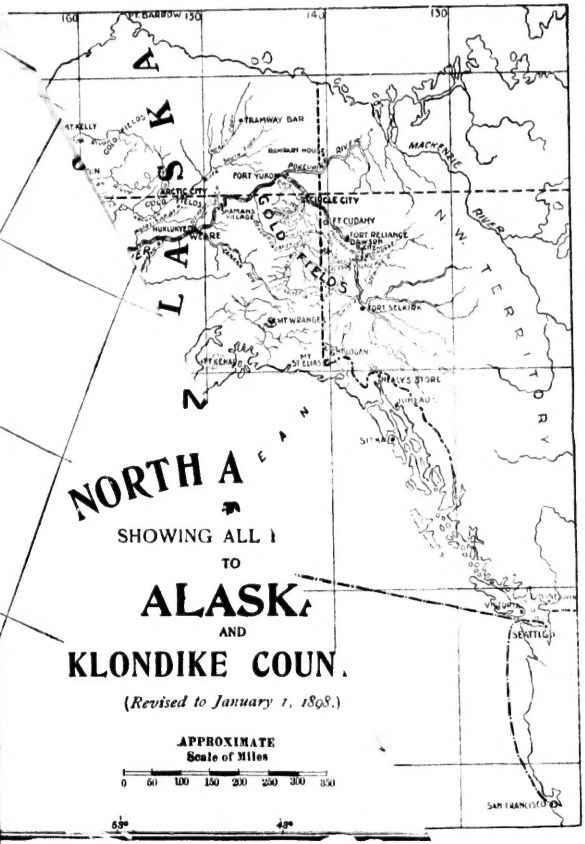

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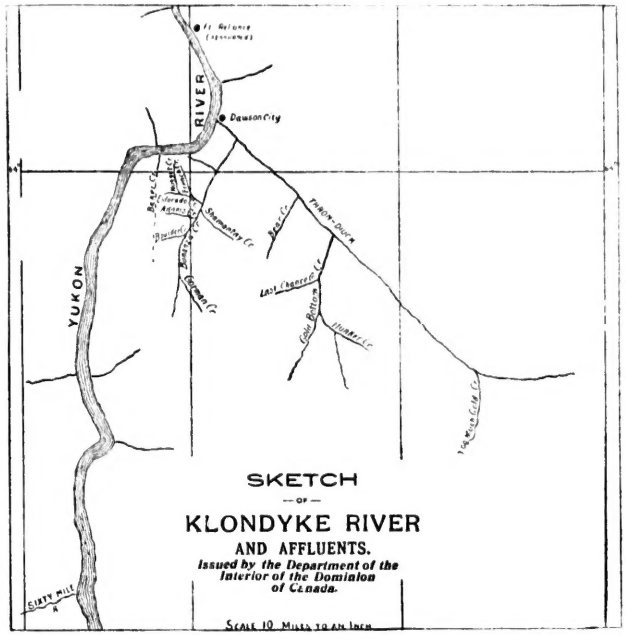

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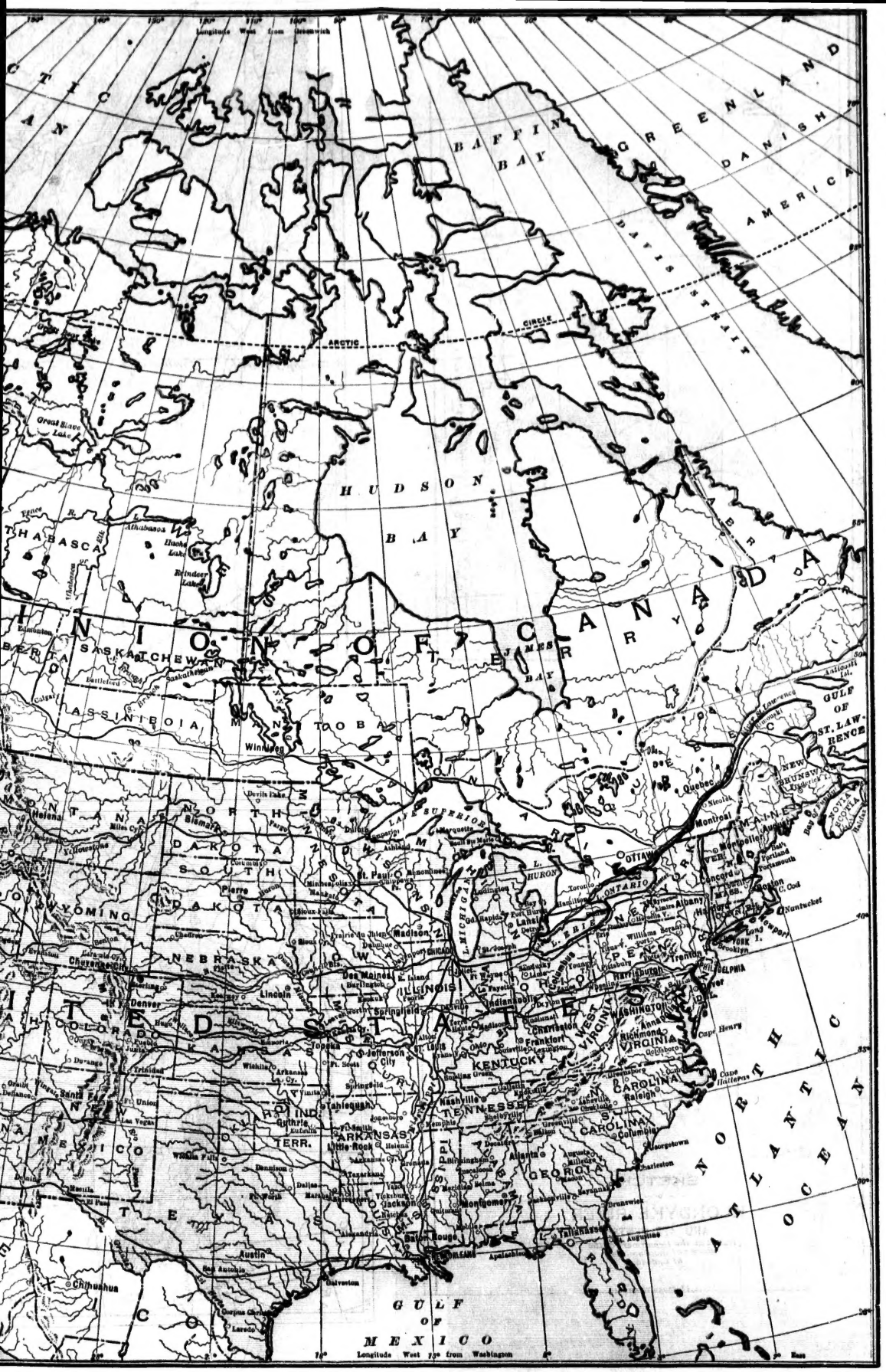
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Quebec
Montreal
Ottawa
Toronto
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Columbia
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Augusta
Atlanta
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Jackson
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Galveston
Austin
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Corpus Christi
Laredo
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Nashville
Memphis
Knoxville
Chattanooga
Little Rock
Helena
Hot Springs
Fort Smith
Guthrie
Kansas City
Nantucket
Newport
Long I.
Cape Cod
Portland
Montreal
Quebec
Halifax
Fredericton
St. John
Charlottetown
Gulf of St. Lawrence
Gulf of Mexico
Longitude West 75° from Washington
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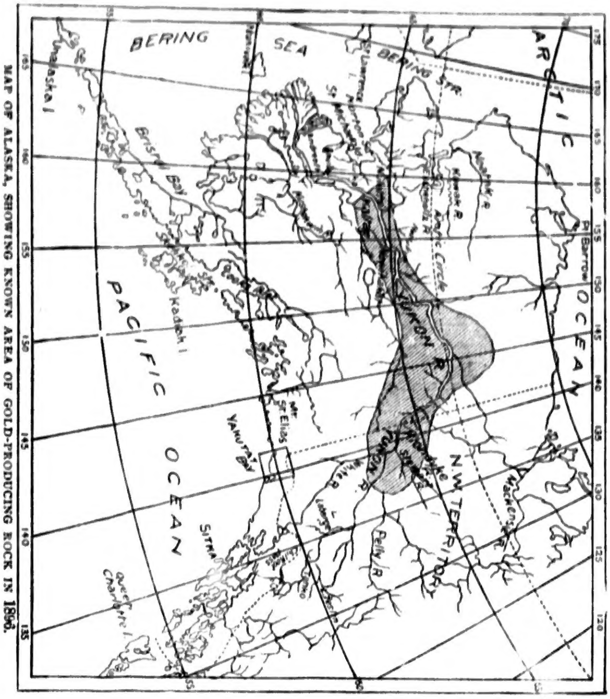
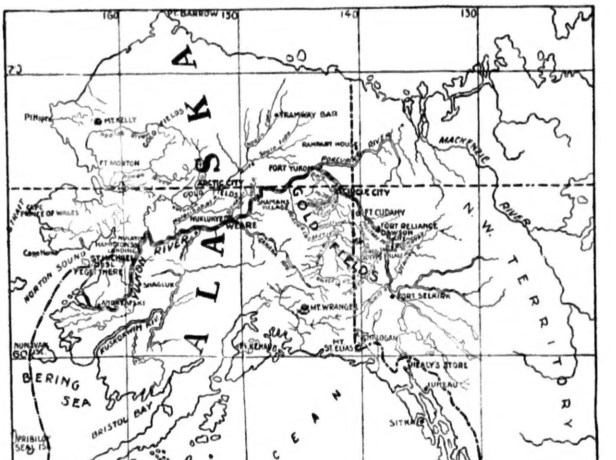
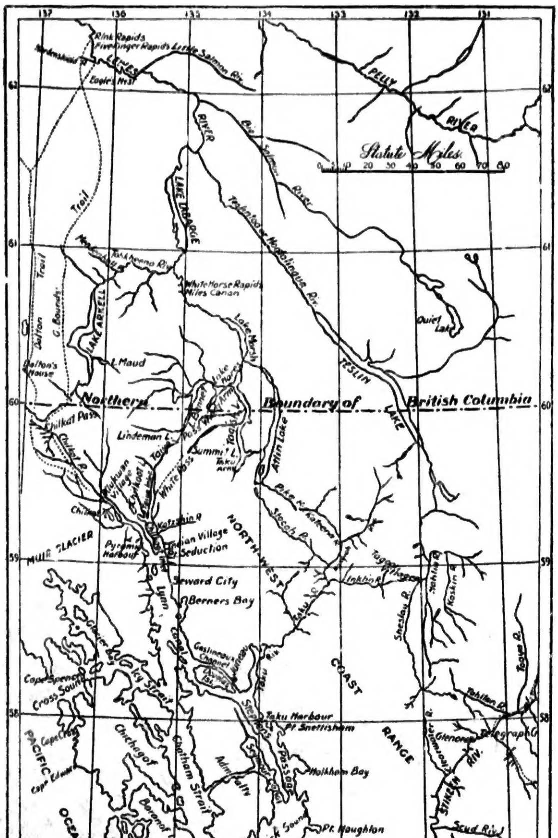
North Atlantic Ocean

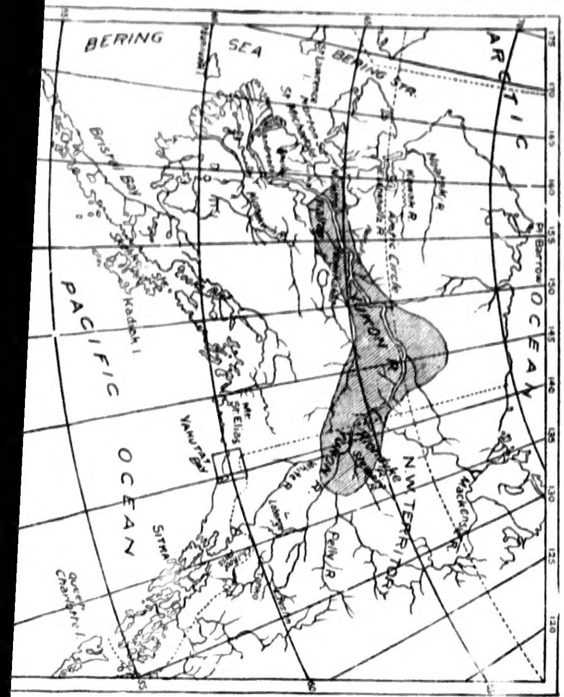


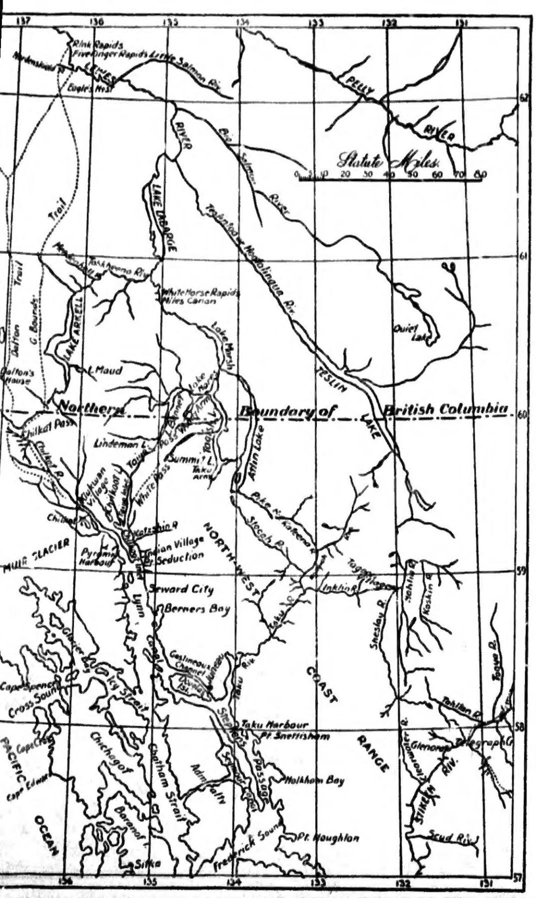
MAP OF ALASKA, SHOWING KNOWN AREA OF GOLD-PRODUCING ROCK IN 1896.
Prepared by J. Edward Spurr, of the United States Geological Survey.

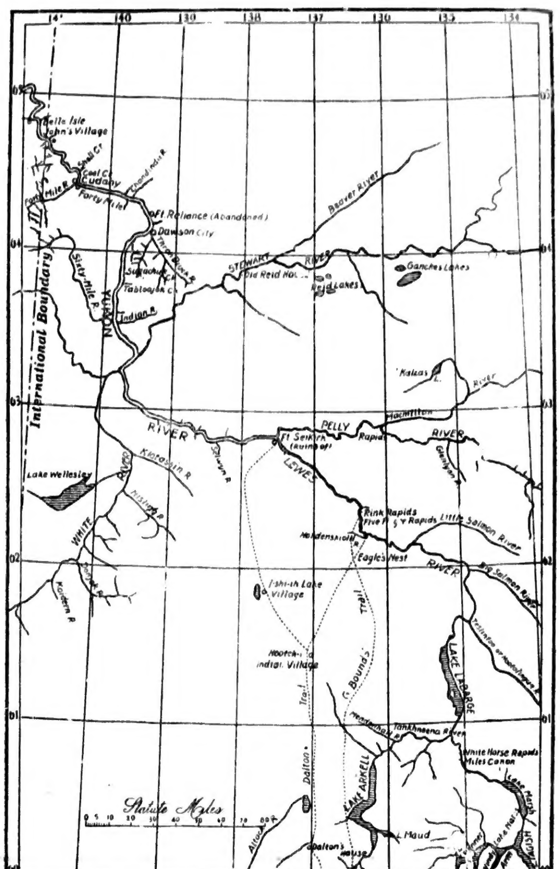




MAP SHOWING THE THREE OVERLAND ROUTES FROM JUNEAU TO FIVE FINGER RAPIDS ON THE LEWES RIVER, WHICH JOINING WITH THE PELLY RIVER AT FORT SELKIRK, MAKES THE YUKON RIVER.
Issued by the Department of the Interior, of the Dominion of Canada.







... SHOWING THE THREE OVERLAND ROUTES FROM JUNEAU TO FIVE FINGER RAPIDS ON THE LEWES RIVER, WHICH JOINING WITH THE PELLY RIVER AT PORT SELKIRK, MAKES THE YUKON RIVER.
Issued by the Department of the Interior, of the Dominion of Canada.

MAP OF THE YUKON RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.
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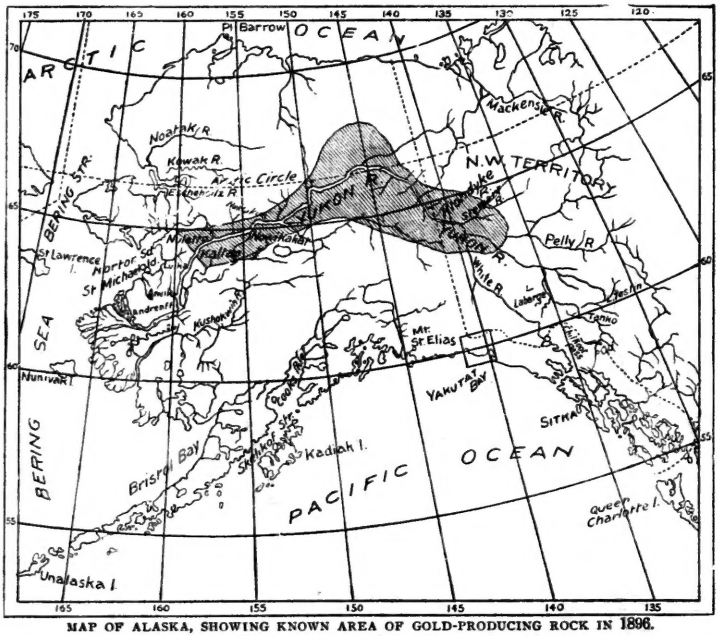

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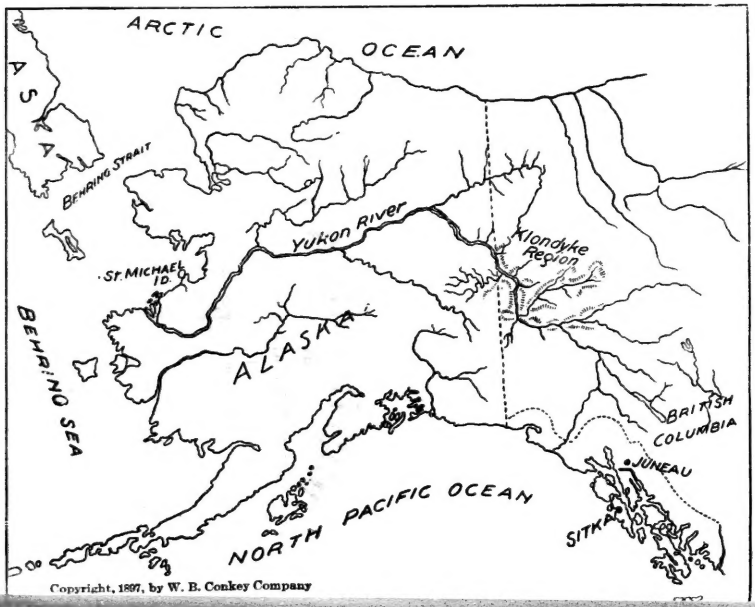

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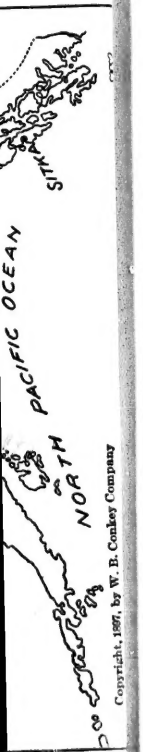

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EN ROUTE

...TO THE...

...KLONDIKE...

A SERIES OF

Photographic Views

...OF THE...

PICTURESQUE LAND OF GOLD AND GLACIERS

Photographed by F. LA ROCHE

PICTURING WITH THE CAMERA'S UNDEVIATING ACCURACY THE ACTUAL PLACES TRAVELED OVER BY GOLD SEEKERS EN ROUTE TO THE LAND OF TREASURE, PRESENTING TO THE EYE ITS BEAUTIES, ITS GRANDEURS AND ITS DANGERS. ALSO SHOWING MANY CAMPS, AND PARTIES OF ARGONAUTS GOING TO THE GOLD FIELDS

A Practical Guide to those contemplating a trip to the Klondike Country; a series of striking interest to those who remain at home

Published by
W. B. Conkey Company
Chicago & New York

THE attention of the civilized world was suddenly directed to Alaska and Northwest Territory last year. Golden treasure had long been suspected of being locked in the snow and ice of the Arctic Northwest, but not until the arrival of the gold laden steamer Excelsior on the 15th of last June at San Francisco, followed by the arrival of the steamer Portland at Seattle July 17th, did the public realize the actual existence of the treasure troves of yellow metal that pioneer argonauts had unearthed in what has come to be known as the Klondike Country.

The author had previously spent many years in pursuing the work of photographing views of the Northwest Arctic region, and when the intense excitement which manifested itself last summer was at its height, determined to undertake an expedition looking to the photographing of the sights and scenes of this New Eldorado, as much with a view of picturing with convincing accuracy its dangers, as well as its strangeness and grandeur. Also, that by a series of pictures of actual scenes and experiences en route, a practical guide for prospective travelers to the Klondike could be presented. These photographs convey a realizing sense of the conditions to be confronted on the way, and will picture to the mind of the reader a life-like idea of those places mentioned daily in the newspapers.

The expedition was undertaken, and how well the intended aim was carried to successful completion must be judged by those who follow the photographer in his journeyings as shown in the following series of photographs

Yours Truly
F. LaRoche

Photo by Sam. C. Partridge, San Francisco, Cal.

LEAVING SAN FRANCISCO FOR THE KLONDIKE. The first steamer to carry passengers to Alaska after the news of the discovery of the rich placers of the Klondike was received, was the Excelsior, which sailed from San Francisco on July 28, 1897. She was laden with 350 passengers and about 800 tons of provisions and supplies. Fully 10,000 persons gathered at the Mission Street wharf to see the first party of gold seekers depart. The Excelsior was the vessel which brought from Alaska the miners who returned with the first gold from the Klondike. There were about $500,000 in gold dust and a considerable number of prospective millionaires in the party.

216148

SKAGUAY HARBOR, SHOWING POINT OF LAND SEPARATING DYEA BAY FROM SKAGUAY. This photo was taken September 12, 1897, at high tide, showing piles driven for one of the three wharfs that were in course of construction; also showing boats used in bringing passengers and outfits from the steamers to the shore, and for transporting from Skaguay to Dyea, around the point of land seen in the center of the picture. Distance from Skaguay to Dyea, five and one-half miles. When the tide is out the boats and scows are left high and dry on the beach, and wagons are driven to the boats, and outfits unloaded and taken on the wagons up the trail to Ragtown, three and one-half miles.

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UNLOADING SCOW AT SKAGUAY. This photograph presents to the reader three distinct kinds of scenery met with on the overland trip—the glacial, the desert, and the forest. The scow shown in the picture having traveled as far as possible by water, is being unloaded into wagons, which are used for transportation up country. There is considerable talk of building a railroad from Skaguay to the Upper Hootalinqua River. Surveys have been made for a syndicate of Canadian capitalists. The route will avoid the White Horse Rapids and the danger of Miles Canyon. The route, as surveyed and laid out, runs from Skaguay Bay across the new White trail to the upper arm of Lake Tagish.

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KLONDIKE MINERS AT SKAGUAY, ALASKA. The photograph here presented was taken on the twelfth of August. Quite a number of miners were encamped here on their road to the gold fields, and it can be easily seen by the heavy clothing worn that the weather was not any too warm at that date. With a long journey ahead, and the trials of an Arctic winter to combat, the men look tolerably contented and happy. They appreciated the desire of our expedition to photograph them. Miners in this region are generally the soul of hospitality, and always glad to welcome a newcomer. Being altogether disinterested in character, such hospitality warms a man's heart even if the climate happen to keep his body cold.

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PACK TRAIN, SKAGUAY.—These miners are about to begin the hardest part of the overland trip. The distance to the head of Lindeman over Chilkoot Pass from Dyea is twenty-four miles. But from Skaguay over the White Pass to the head of Windy Arm is thirty-one miles. The advantage of the latter journey, however, is that it is passable for horses the entire distance, while a horse cannot go over Chilkoot Pass. From Skaguay to Windy Arm, the round trip takes three days, while it requires a good, husky man to pack 100 pounds over the route. The necessary outfit for each man weighing not less than 1,000 pounds, it can be easily seen that about thirty-five days would be needed by a man to pack his outfit unaided over either the Chilkoot or White Pass.

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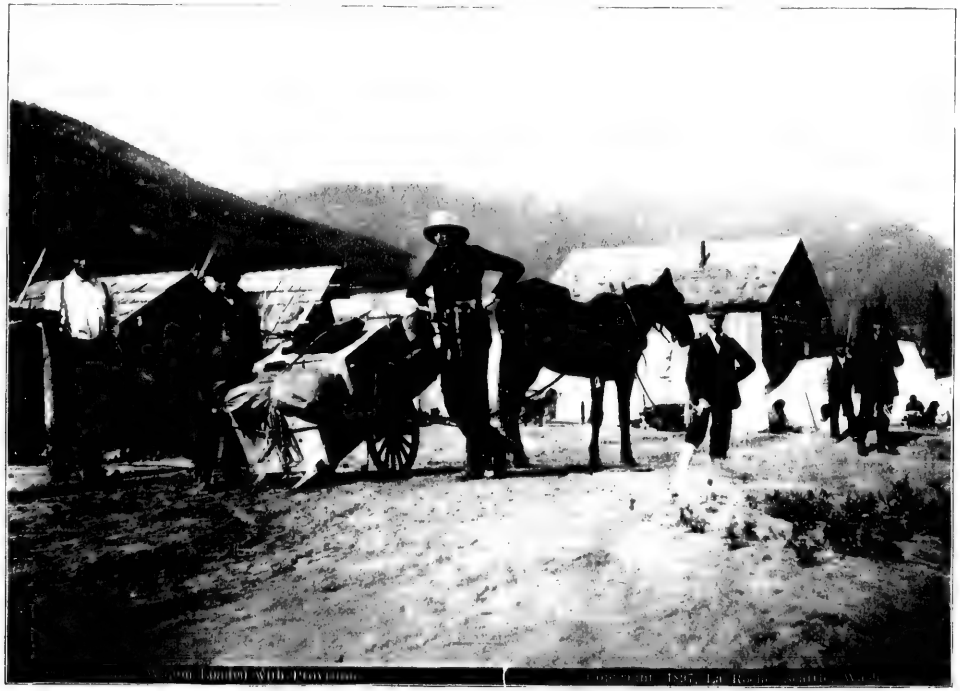
STEAMER QUEEN UNLOADING KLONDIKERS ON SCOW AT DYEA. Although Dyea is the point of departure for the Chilkoot Pass, wharf facilities there were none during the first rush, and the hundreds of gold seekers who crossed the Chilkoot in 1897 were taken from the steamers upon scows, as is here shown. After a journey of a thousand miles upon a palatial steamer they were now at the gateway of the golden North. Those not coming by regular lines were put ashore upon the rocks a mile and even two miles from Dyea. Not unfrequently these landings were made in the rain and supplies belonging to one individual were put off in different places at considerable distances apart.

3679. Blacksmith Shop, Skaguay.

BLACKSMITH SHOP AT SKAGUAY.—Here the blacksmith charges $6 for shoeing a horse and $10 for shoeing oxen; in the latter part of August, 1897, during the horseshoe nail famine, as much as $1 was paid for a nail. Several in-going parties to the Klondike have taken burros and small horses, instead of dogs, for draft and general-service beasts. It is said that one pony or burro will draw 3,000 pounds on the frozen surface of a lake. Another advantage claimed is that they can be used more profitably as pack animals during the summer. But one of the possible advantages not to be overlooked, is the fact that healthy horseflesh is a luxury when no other food is in sight.

DOGS PACKING ON DYEA TRAIL.—Dogs are most valuable in winter, as they are then attached to sleds and will draw 100 pounds twenty miles or more a day, five or six being usually harnessed to each sled. Dog teams were found of great service by the many parties who came out from Dawson during the past winter, and but for them many would not have been able to make the trip. The native dogs of the interior are the most valuable and have sold as high as $200 each in Dawson. Car loads of mongrel curs have been shipped into Seattle and other points of departure for Alaska, and there trained to work in teams, making both day and night hideous with their howlings.



KLONDIKE WAGON LOADED WITH PROVISIONS. An enterprising Dyea storekeeper had a dozen of these wagons which he rented for $1 an hour. An advance payment of $20 had to be made to secure the owner against unforeseen accidents and lapse of memory. As the original cost could not have been over $40, the security would seem to be ample and the investment profitable. Some of the animals used would not take first prize at a horse fair for beauty, but almost any old thing in the shape of a horse was in demand at from $200 to $300, and would earn $20 to $30 a day. On the right and left are Indians, while the frame building is the Indian headquarters and the home of their chief, Isaac.

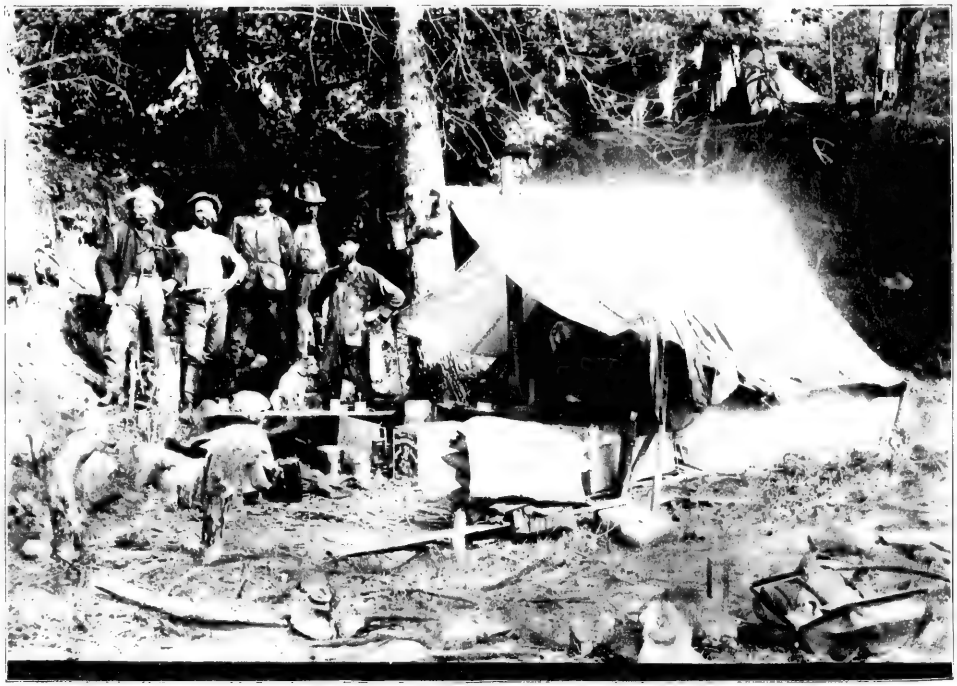
[illegible] Hitched to Cart Fording Dyea River [illegible]

FORDING DYEA RIVER.—At the second crossing, about one mile and a half above the first, these men are crossing with perhaps 1,000 pounds of provisions. In September the river here was not far from one hundred feet wide and eighteen inches deep. In spring the melting snow sometimes increases the depth of water to four feet or more, when a ferry is used as at the first crossing. Here a party of five are north bound, crossing and recrossing with this cart until all their supplies are over, while two packers with horses are returning south after other loads. Long rubber boots protect them from the water, while a complete camp outfit appears upon the cart, so that they can pitch their tents wherever circumstances demand.

ACTRESSES FORDING DYEA RIVER.—These women were said to be under contract for two seasons at a Dawson City theater. A provision of the contract called for their arrival in Dawson in eighteen days after leaving Juneau, a remarkably quick trip. As they were not incumbered with other baggage than hand satchels, and made the journey in September they endured few, if any, hardships. Four of them are here fording the river with high rubber boots, while the fifth, not so well supplied, is being carried across the stream. It is estimated that 100 women crossed the passes during the summer and fall of 1897. There are rare chances in Dawson for women of courage and respectability. Dressmakers receive $25 for a plain dress and $50 for silk costumes.

TOWING PROVISIONS UP DYEA RIVER. Twelve hundred pounds are here loaded upon a flat-bottomed boat, which is being pulled and pushed upstream to the head of canoe navigation, about six miles north of Dyea. It exhibits another method of moving supplies. With indescribable toil hundreds of men labored on from day to day in an almost frenzied effort to reach Dawson City before the freezing of the lakes and rivers beyond the mountain passes; and in their desperation at the slow process made, some would abandon their outfits and push on, trusting to luck and a well-filled purse to take them through, while others would cache their supplies with the hope of finding them again if compelled to turn back.

PACK TRAIN AT "LITTLE" OR "BLACK LAKE," SKAGUAY TRAIL.—This is a small lake on the Skaguay trail, about five miles out from Skaguay. A rough roadway has been formed along its left hand shore, where pack trains may proceed with some ease in single file, Indian fashion. When one stops to think that fast freight is whirled across the continent from San Francisco to New York in fifteen days, and passengers over the same ground in about five days, some idea of the slowness of travel in Alaska may be had. To go from Dyea to Dawson City, overland, eighteen days is considered "cannon ball" time, and only those who "travel light" can hope to do it. The supplies of a pack train must be allowed more than double this time.



CAMP LIFE AT FINNEGAN'S POINT. This was but one of the seventy-five camps at the point at the time this view was taken, and in the background, on right and left, others may be seen. Each individual camp existed only until the supplies belonging to it were packed to some point farther on. Owing to inexperience in cooking, and the character of the food supplies carried, many suffered severely. Dyspepsia, that nightmare of Americans, was developed by overwork and want of proper food. Rheumatism, pneumonia, bronchitis [illegible] results from exposure to wet and cold, [illegible] w the importance of having a sound constitution, living carefully, and eating well coo[illegible]d and wholesome food.

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PACKERS ON TRAIL NEAR SHEEP CAMP.—This is not an exceptionally bad part of the trail, but a fair illustration of the rugged condition of the country through which the trail runs. With 100 pounds on his back, the packer need be hardly to encounter the trials of such a tramp. Many men carry and haul their own supplies to save the exorbitant charges of packing, although the work, considering local conditions, is well worth the large payment demanded by the Indians. Pack horses and mules will soon be substituted entirely for Indians and there are numerous plans on foot to improve the trail. There is little doubt that competition will cut down the charges, which, at present, are a big item to the prospective gold seekers.

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SHEEP CAMP IN WINTER. This is a bird's-eye view of Sheep Camp. The peculiar name is derived from the mountain sheep which at one time were plentiful in this section. It is a typical Alaskan scene, wild and rugged, yet the tread of civilization is forcing its impress upon the surrounding country. With an unquenchable ambition for gold, mankind will not only exterminate the mountain sheep in this region, but dare to overcome the remorseless avalanche. About the middle of September the glacier played havoc with a number of tents, which it destroyed. The trouble was caused by the breaking up of the glacier, which washed away the tents. Away to the left is the last log crossing of Dyea River.

FRONT STREET AT SHEEP CAMP SETTLEMENT.—This is the principal camp on the Dyea trail. In August and September there were a thousand or more people encamped here. The log structure on the left was the leading hotel, where you might eat for 75 cents, and sleep on the floor for 50 cents, if you furnished your own bedding. Beyond here a meal could not be had at any price. This is right on the edge of what is known as the timber line. Thence to the other side is about ten miles. In all the district there is not sufficient wood to heat a cup of coffee, so you are obliged to carry your own wood if you want to camp within that distance.

FIFTY TONS OF PROVISIONS STORED AT CRATER LAKE. These have been freighted across the lake in the flat-bottomed canoe seen in the foreground, and now lie scattered about among the rocks awaiting transportation through the rocky defile leading onward from the right of the photograph, a distance of one and one-half miles, to Happy Camp. A word may be said here about food: Highly carbonaceous food should predominate, and alcoholic stimulants be avoided. One pound of tea is equal to seven pounds of coffee; three-quarters of an ounce of saccharine is equal to twenty-five pounds of sugar. All such matters should be carefully considered by the gold seeker who would lighten his burden.

A TRYING CLIMB ON DYEA TRAIL.—Mile after mile of such broken roadway and uncertain footing is met with en route to the mountain top. The photographer has shown here the toilsome march of the pack train bearing supplies for the miners. At the moment this photograph was taken, a fallen horse in front of the line had compelled all behind it to stop until the animal was assisted to regain its feet. In this picture can be seen two men carrying a section of a boat. Later, even this light load became too great to be borne up the mountain side, and they were compelled to saw it in two pieces and divide the burden. On reaching the shores of the lake, the pieces of the boat were patched together again.

PACK OXEN ON DYEA TRAIL.—In the foreground are four Indian packers returning from the summit of Chilkoot, having made $18 each for their day's labor. Oxen are regarded in some respects as the most desirable of all pack animals in summer, as when possible to take them over the mountains they are not brought back, but bring a handsome profit for meat. One of these was killed at Lake Linderman, and the heart sold for $7, the head for $12.50, and the balance of the animal 50 cents a pound. One lot of cattle, representing but a small investment in Seattle, was driven in over the Dalton trail and brought $8,364 in Dawson. Another lot was killed at the river and the frozen meat rafted down.

REV. MR. YOUNG AND DR. McEWEN, PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONARIES BOUND FOR KLONDIKE, AT LONG LAKE.—All classes of people are on the way to the golden north—missionaries as well as variety actresses. Rev. Mr. Young, on the left, is one of the oldest mission workers in Alaska, having established the mission at Fort Wrangle many years ago. Much painstaking work has been done in offering the Scriptures to the natives in a way they can understand. Many of the Indians can read in their own language, which, as printed, consists of a literature of translations of the Bible, prayer book and hymn book. Some of the Indians are particularly susceptible of religious teaching.

ACTRESSES BOUND FOR THE KLONDIKE AT HAPPY CAMP.—Now that the mountainous district has been reached our company of variety actresses have, with one exception, dropped their burdensome skirts and donned male attire that they may more easily overcome the hardships of the march. They have crossed the pass and are now fifteen miles from the point where we first saw them fording the river. They are in a camp which is known as "Happy Camp," a resting place en route. They still have 500 miles to go before reaching their destination, but as the balance of the trip is made by water, it may be said that the greatest difficulties have been overcome and the rest will be comparatively easy sailing.

SawMill
LAKE BENNETT
N.W. Mounted Police Pass
Camp
Muskeg
Log Mountain
LAKE LINDERMAN
Camp
SHALLOW LAKE
Ford (2½ft. deep rock bottom)
Camp
DEEP LAKE
Camp
LONG LAKE
MIDDLE LAKE
Camp
Happy Camp
Very Sparce wood
CRATER LAKE
Snow Field
Summit Scales
Chilkoot Pass
SUMMIT LAKE
Stone House
Trail
Horse Bridge
Sheep Camp
(Last Timber)
Camp Pleasant
Horse Bridge
End of Canyon
Beginning of Canyon
Summit
White Pass
Ford
Horse Bridge
Camp
View of Navigation
Foot Log
Horse Bridge
Finigan's Point
Ford (2½ft. deep)
Camp
Horse Bridge
Ford (2½ft. deep)
Ferry
Camp
Horse Bridge
DYEA
Camp
INLET
Valley
Horse Bridge
SKAGUAY
MAP OF
DYEA AND SKAGUAY TRAILS